



DOUGLAS ANIMAL WELFARE GROUP

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November 2022

Dear friend of Douglas Animal Welfare Group,

Another year has already gone by since our last holiday letter and Douglas Animal Welfare Group was busier than ever! All of our programs have been going gangbusters! More feral cats and kittens were trapped and spayed or neutered than ever before. This has resulted in a huge increase in the number of kittens that have been fixed and adopted. With record inflation, our Community Assistance program has seen a big increase in requests from individuals needing help with getting medical care for their animals. We have waived co-pays for our Fix-A-Family pet program through the end of the fiscal year. As a result, we are seeing an increase in the number of dogs and cats using our spay/neuter program. FISH has been asking DAWG to donate more food for needy animals in the Ranchos area as they aren't getting enough to keep up with the demand. Also, the shelter (Douglas County Animal Services) has seen a big increase in the number of dogs and cats being surrendered or abandoned which has resulted in more and more medical expenses. This leads us to our appeal this year for donations to our **Shelter Medical Program**.

DAWG's **Shelter Medical Program** enables animals at DCAS to receive necessary medical care with the goal to make the animals as adoptable as possible. This includes senior exams, lab work, x-rays, ultrasounds, dental work, surgeries, tumor removals, medications, etc. Just since this July, DAWG has already had over **25 shelter animals treated at a cost of over \$8000**. This has averaged **\$320 per animal**. One animal, a young dog named **Ophelia**, has already cost us over \$1600 and that figure will be thousands more as she needs a cardiac operation in order to save her life. **Here is her story.**



Ophelia is a 9-month old female Belgian Malinois/Shepherd mix that was found as a stray and taken to the Douglas County Animal Services in August. While at the shelter

she was sent for her spay surgery at Animal Medical Services where they discovered that she had a heart murmur. Shelter staff took her to Carson Valley Veterinary Hospital. They confirmed that she should have an echocardiogram. Ophelia had already been adopted by this point and shelter staff asked DAWG if we would cover the expense of that test which we did. Upon having the echocardiogram, she was found to have severe pulmonary stenosis, a heart defect, and she was put on a beta blocker. Her adopters returned her to the shelter because they did not want to deal with a dog with heart issues that may not live for very long. In order to have a chance at a long life, Ophelia will need a **balloon valvuloplasty surgery** that will be done at Blue Pearl in Reno. Ophelia went for a consultation on September 21 that included an exam, echocardiogram, ECG, and a Bubble Study. The cost for her cardiac surgery scheduled for November 2 will be **over \$6,000**. In addition, there will be expenses for her follow-up care and medication.

It is rare that we have an animal that requires this kind of expensive medical treatment, but Ophelia is a sweet young dog that has a chance at a long, normal life if she has this surgery. But who wants to adopt a dog that is going to have these huge medical bills? The good news is that with the promise of Ophelia having her heart surgery paid for, she was adopted a second time!!!

Unfortunately, Ophelia's case will take a big chunk out of our shelter medical budget which is why we are asking for your support. **If you are able to send a donation this holiday season, it would help our mission to treat more needy shelter animals.** We are so grateful for all of our wonderful supporters. You enable DAWG to keep all of our programs running year after year. Thousands of animals have been helped because of your generosity.

May this holiday season bring you and your family peace, comfort and joy. May 2023 be a wonderful year for all including Ophelia and her wonderful adopter!

With gratitude,

Lori Paxson
DAWG President

